



Pedagogical Processes in Learning English Language at Secondary School Level in Sikkim, India

Roshni Sharma¹, Sudarshan Mishra²
sudarshanmishra@yahoo.com

¹Research Scholar, Department of Education, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha

²Head, Department of Education, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha

Abstract

English has a significant role in every state in the school curriculum, and several scholars have researched the status of teaching English at secondary level. The purpose of teaching English is to build multilingual languages that can enrich our entire language; this has been an ongoing national vision. The weak status of teaching English and the use of conventional teaching methods are found in the study of literature. It is ironic, however, that while English enjoys a high status in the wake of globalization, it is quite inadequate and unproductive to teach and learn in educational institutions. Present strategies of teaching English in the classroom are no longer viable, but they can be 'communicatively' driven.

The key disadvantages are the low status of teaching English, non-availability of professionally trained and educated teachers, less weighting provided for teaching English and no proper transactional strategies adopted for teaching. In this sense, the extent of the pedagogical processes of learning the English language must be examined. The target population of the current study in the South district of Sikkim was limited to 90 teachers teaching English in 30 secondary schools. Classroom observation schedule covering the aspects like engage, explore, explain, elaborate, evaluate was used for collection of data.

Classroom observation is also one of the powerful methods of monitoring the success of the instructor in the classroom. Through this study, attempt has been made to see the extent as to how constructivist approach is used by the teachers in the teaching learning processes. Conversely, study has explored the teaching processes used by English teachers in the classroom towards learning English language at secondary schools in Sikkim. The sequential processes are mainly used to link up the connection between past and the present learning experience, designing activities for students engagement, assess learning outcomes, type of resource used in learning, identifying and developing concepts, reconstructing students knowledge, assessing students current level of understanding in listening, speaking, reading and writing, elaboration through recapitulative questions, development of higher order thinking, evaluation of students of key concepts and skills, identifying and motivating the students to identify future learning goals and evaluating students knowledge through quiz, debate, role play, recitation, tests, observation and performance dialogue, essay and summary writing and projects, respectively.

Key words: Classroom Observation, Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate

Introduction

English plays a major role in the school curriculum in every state in India. Teaching English is aimed at developing multilingual languages that can enrich all our languages; this has been an ongoing national vision (Mishra, 2009). English needs to find its place, along with other Indian languages, in various states, where other languages for children improve the teaching and learning of English; and in English-medium schools, where other Indian languages need to be respected in order to minimize English's perceived hegemony. The relative success of the 'English Medium' school shows that when it is not taught as a language, language is acquired through exposure in a meaningful way. Therefore, English must be seen in relation to other subjects, a language is of special importance to primary education in the curriculum, and therefore all teaching is language teaching in a way.

The gap between "English as subject" and "English as medium" will be bridged by this perspective. In this way, we can shift toward a popular school system that does not differentiate between "teaching a language" and using a language as an educational tool. Input-rich communication environments are a requirement for first or second language learning. Inputs include textbooks, textbooks selected for learners and class libraries, which allow for a range of genres: printing (for example, broad books for young learners); media support such as newspaper columns/learner magazines, audio cassettes, radio); and "authentic" materials; parallel books and materials in more than one language. By transforming schools into community learning centres, the language experience of marginalized learners needs to be enriched. In English, all teachers who teach English should have basic proficiency. Every child should be constitutionally promised to all teachers within eight years of education; basic English language proficiency should be possible within about four years.

From the very beginning, a multilingual approach to education would discuss potential detrimental consequences, such as the lack of one's own language and the strain of sheer incomprehension. The ability to teach English on the basis of some experience of how languages are taught in ways relevant to their circumstance and levels. To provide an input-rich curriculum which focuses on meaning, a variety of materials should be available. Language testing must not be related to "achievement" in relation to specific syllabi, but must be based on language proficiency evaluation.

Constructivism is basically a theory based on observation and scientific study about how people learn. It says that people construct their own understanding and how knowledge of the world through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences. When we encounter something new, we have to reconcile it with our previous ideas and experiences, maybe changing what we believe, or maybe discarding the new information as irrelevant. In any case, we are active creators of our own knowledge. To do this, we must ask questions, explore and assess what we know (Zainuddin & Ahmed, 2008).

With the help of constructivist approach English plays an important role in shaping the students creativity as there are so many activities like drama, role play, writing diaries, giving ending to the stories and creating something new out of it where students are made to brain storm and make use of all the four skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing. In this manner students learn to work in groups and exchange their ideas with each other which help them to develop their

communication skill and social skills. The activities that the teachers provide to the students in English language class make them a new discoverer of their new learning. Hence, the 5E model is an educational model based on the constructivist approach to learning, which assumes that prior to their old knowledge/ideas, learners construct new ideas. The 5E's are split into five stages, including Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate. These 5E's offer teachers and students the opportunity to experience common practices, to use and draw on previous knowledge and experience, to develop new meanings, and to help determine their understanding of a concept. After reviewing the related literature, the researchers found that a large number of studies have been done in abroad and in India. Thus, this study is intended towards the study of constructive processes of learning English language.

Researchers mainly studied status of teaching the subject as second language i.e., methods adopted for effective learning, weightage given to English, problems faced by teachers. Mathuramani and Ganesan (2011) recommended that teaching must include two major components, sending and receiving information. The key goal of many second and foreign language learners is to develop strong listening and speaking skills in English, and today the English teacher needs to be well versed in existing approaches to oral instructions. Communication methods serve this purpose without destroying the objectives. The uses of innovative methods in education not only increases knowledge, but also empower people.

In Bangladesh, the higher secondary approach to communicative language teaching based on the experiences of teachers and classroom experience showed that communicative language teaching is widely advocated by various applied linguists and teachers of the English language. As it follows successful language teachings. Nevertheless, the adoption of CLT in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has faced and encountered a great deal of problems. Such difficulties vary widely from nation to nation. The problems are built into the economic, socio-cultural and education framework of the EFL Counties. Conversely, the introduction of English-as-Foreign Language (EFL) commutative language teaching has faced and encountered a large number of problems. Such challenges differ widely from country to country. The problems in EFL counties are embedded in the fiscal, socio-cultural and educational system. Teachers who are in the implementation process of this teaching method also maintain CLT perceptions, views and expectations, some of which are either right or wrong (Chowdhury, 2011). While analyzing the status of teaching English in India, the National Focus Group Report (2006) on Teaching English reported that today's teaching and learning of English is marked by adversity in schools and the linguistic atmosphere that promotes the acquisition of English, and by systematically pervasive classroom procedures for teaching a textbook for success in an examination (NCERT, 2006).

Rathore (2013) found out that learning through group activity helps in learning concepts better and makes them learn through classmates. It also makes them active participate in the class and teaching English through group activity helps the students in achieving higher score.

In particular, research on the necessity of grammar teaching examines the status of grammar in language learning, the features of foreign language learning,

the theoretical basis of the approach to communicative teaching, and the practical impact of ignoring grammar teaching for a thorough understanding of the necessity of grammar teaching. Grammar instruction cannot be diluted at any time, at any point and under any circumstances. It should be an important part of China's teaching of foreign language (Wang, 2010). This includes the basic features and characteristics of language learning and the subjective atmosphere in which foreign language learning takes place. In addition, grammar is an important way to train the communicative competence of students in teaching the English language.

Venkateswaran & Gayathri (2012) articulated that teacher will have to concentrate on improving himself/herself and get empowered. Teacher growth is a mechanism of self-empowerment. Teacher development which is continuous and thus continuous professional development is a process which includes in it the ways of becoming aware of the trends through various other means such as a positive attitude, an open mind, the readiness to accept changes, getting prepared to change roles from that of a facilitator of learning to change agent and thus to be learner throughout acquiring decision making skills, try out different practices and looking for opportunities to have differing experiences.

Jha (2013) revealed six critical facts. Firstly, the Ethiopian teachers do not keep abreast of ongoing ELT activities of worldwide significance. Secondly, English is being taught and learnt as a subject rather than as a language because English is exposed to the learners only within the four walls of classroom as a part of sloppy curriculum. It is forgotten that language is formed and moulded by the unconscious action of the community as a whole rather than compressing the grammar of a language into a set of rigid rules and stuffing them into the heads of the students. Thirdly, the course duration comes to an end by the time mastering phase begins. Fourthly, mother tongue education is emerging as a serious hindrance in English education. Fifthly, neither students nor teachers are motivated to excel in terms of mastering the language due to many-headed hydra like low reward causing reluctance to teach, mother tongue obsession, teacher's comfort, ego war among teachers, etc. Sixthly, the average teachers are not well-grounded in ELT because they themselves are products of weak TEFL programmes in the country.

Senthilkumar (2010) confirmed that if children have not learned how to learn, they cannot overcome obstacles to learning. Teachers act as learning role models and teach students how to become independent and efficient learners. If they understand the aim of a lesson and have some input, pupils will be more motivated. Teachers understand themselves and examine whether all the students in the class are being addressed. Sometimes, by favoring some students and ignoring others, without being aware of it, they make the difference between students greater.

In India today, English is a sign of the ambitions of individuals for excellence in education and a fuller involvement in national and international life. Its forgotten or insignificant colonial roots, its original position in independent India, geared to higher education (as a "library language", a "window on the world"), now felt to be socially and linguistically insufficiently inclusive, English's current status stems from its dominant presence on the world stage and from its reflection in the national arena. It is predicted that by 2010, a boom in English-language learning is expected to include a third of the world's population (Graddol, 1997).

The main purpose of this study was to examine the pedagogical processes in teaching English language using 5E instructional model based on constructivist approach with respect to methods of teaching, classroom interaction, students participation, use of teaching learning resources and assessment and also to find out the problems faced by English language teachers with regard to listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Method

This study has used qualitative survey method. The target population of the current study is the South district of Sikkim. The sample was limited to 90 teachers teaching English in 30 secondary schools selected purposively. Classroom observation schedule to see how constructivist approach covering the aspects like, engage, explore, explain, elaborate, evaluate was used for collection of data.

Result

Engagement Stage

i. Connecting past with present learning experiences

In most of the schools, teachers did not try to connect the past and present learning experiences of the students. Most often, teachers used textbook reading method. They came to the class, asked the students to open the book and started to move further with the topic without even trying to know about the students' past experiences related to the topic. In some of the cases only the teachers, before starting the class, the first and foremost thing that they usually did was they asked the students whether they have any experiences related to the topic. According to the experiences that the students shared, teachers connected the past experiences of the students with the present learning experiences.

In one of the schools, the teacher brought a guitar to the class and called one of the students to strum a guitar, while she asked other students to close their ears, and asked the students to put their hands away from the ears and asked one of the students to strum the guitar again. Hence, a connection was made between the students' previous experiences of listening to music and the present experience of not being able to listen to the music.

ii. Designing activities to engage students

Only in few cases, teachers designed various activities to engage the students related with the topic. For example, teachers divided the class into two groups and gave the topic for discussion and after the discussion; students from each group came in front of the class and shared their points to their friends. But in most of the cases, the teachers simply moved on with their explanation of the content without involving the students for different activities in the classroom. It was observed that in one of the schools, the teacher made the students to recall the old nursery rhyme "Rain Rain Go Away Come Again another Day, Little Johnny Wants To Play" as her topic to be taught to the students was "Rain On The Roof." The teachers then asked the students why little Johnny did not like the rain? The teachers further asked them how they feel when it rains.

The teachers made the students listen to a short audio clip of the sound of rain and asked them to close their eyes and listen to it. The teachers further asked them to focus and let their minds freely flow in their own thoughts and imagination. The teachers were trying to grab the students' attention and help them share their experiences of rain as the poem was on the poet's experiences of the rain. In this way the teachers were trying to engage every student in the classroom.

iii. Covering essential points

In most of the schools, the teachers did not cover the essential points in depth. They skipped some of the important and relevant points to be explained to the students. They straight away proceeded towards the topic leaving behind the important terminology and phrases and sentences where students find difficulty in understanding the meaning of those difficult words and phrases when explained by the teachers in the process of teaching and learning. Only in few schools, the teachers considered the title as well as the theme of the topic where they successfully explained and demonstrated the important points to be covered.

iv. Making students understand learning outcomes of the activities

Most of the school teachers did not make students understand learning outcomes of the activities that they perform. They did not give any tasks to the students to get involved into it and even if some teachers gave the task to the students they were not told as to why they are doing such activities, what is the purpose of getting involved into those activities.

In one of the school, the teacher was so clear about the learning outcomes of the activities and she also made clear to the students by giving specific reasons as to why the activities are conducted to them in various skills. For example, for reading skill she said that reading is important because it helps to develop the accuracy in reading English. It develops the skill of correct pronunciation. It also develops a habit of reading English fluently. It also forms desirable habits of reading newspaper, magazines, books, stories, plays, etc. in English. Similarly, for writing skill she said that writing skill is important because it helps the students to learn language. It enables them to do various exercises given in the textbook. It also enables them to explore their ideas of thoughts in good writing. For speaking skill, she said that students' speaking skill helps for career success. It boosts confidence and helps to develop critical thinking. It improves communication skills. Listening skill allows the students to make sense of and understood what another person is saying and enhances interpersonal connections. The teacher further said that if the students become competent enough in all these four skills then they will be able to study all the topics like prose, poem, drama, grammar without any difficulty.

v. Resources used to facilitate learning

During the observation, it was found that in most of the schools, the teachers did not make use of resources during engagement stage. Only resource used frequently was textbooks. Few teachers used resources like guitar, flash cards, picture strip story, and audio visual aids to facilitate learning.

Exploration Stage

i. Identifying and developing concepts

In most of the schools, the teachers, gave tasks to the students so that they could identify and develop concepts.

In one of the schools, the teachers increased the intensity by asking the students to write faster. The students reached to that point where they couldn't try at all to write. The teachers then intervened and asked the students, how they felt, to which everyone more or less had the same answer. The teachers then told the students that the character of the biography also faced similar challenges in her early life as a complete deaf. This activity made the students to identify and develop concept related to the topic.

ii. Observing and listening to students

Students were divided into different groups. Almost all the teachers, in different schools divided each group to discuss the concepts among themselves. The teachers meanwhile guided the students whenever necessary and were ever ready to clarify the students doubts regarding the activities. Most of the teachers after the completion of the students activity, asked the students to present their points in turns. The teacher listened to the points as the students read it out. Meanwhile, the teacher also observed the groups who awaited their turns.

iii. Students Participation in exploring new things

The teachers in most of the schools explored students' physical participation by asking some members to write down the presented points on the chalk board so that other students (group) can see it as well. They also instructed other group members to write down the doubts if they had any, and wish to clarify with the groups that presented the points. The teachers made the use of simple teaching aids like, textbooks, video-clips and other materials very skillfully where students made use of chalkboard to write their points and notebooks to do the same.

iv. Helping students to reconstruct their knowledge

Half of the teachers gave some time to all the groups to focus on what they have written, spoken, read and understood. The teachers also asked the students to combine all the concepts formed after the activity. To accept and use students' ideas in all the four skills, most of the teachers made each group to discuss among themselves about what other skills they had learnt better from opponent groups. Each group reflected upon their presentation and learnt something new from other opponent group.

Explanation Stage

i. Using students' previous experiences

In most of the schools the teachers did not try to use student's previous experiences to connect with the new concept. They simply started to begin the class. The teachers did not give the definition of the terms, neither did they explain about it. However, in few schools, the teachers made use of students' previous experience as the base for explaining new concepts by making them do certain activities to come to the topic. They asked students to read out the stanzas of the

lesson and discussed it with the students providing them with appropriate explanations. Only one stanza was focused at a time to avoid confusion among the students.

ii. Explanations in clear and concrete terms

To make the students clear and concrete of the lesson, only few teachers made the students read out the stanzas and after the stanzas are read out by the students, the teachers supported their explanation with clear language and voice modulation. The teachers checked students if they were paying attention. They read out the stanzas one more time by themselves so that the students get the idea of correct stress intonation and pronunciation.

iii. Examples and illustration relevant to the points

In most of the cases, the teachers gave examples and illustrated the relevant points to explain. They gave examples from real life situations to link the lesson and students get clear knowledge about the topic that was taught to them.

In one of the schools, the teacher was teaching a grammar lesson and the topic was “How active voice changes into passive voice” and she was following the inductive method. She wrote the following sentences on the board as examples:

Active voice	Passive voice
I rang the bell	The bell was rung by me
You forgot the book	The book was forgotten by you
He sang a song	A song was sang by him

After that she helped the students to analyze the two types of sentences. She then asked them to point out the subject and predicate and verb. She then asked them to compare the position of the subject and the object in both the sentences. She then asked them to point out the change in verbs. At last, she asked them to tell the changes that they found in the second type of sentences. When the students grasped the above-mentioned shifts, they came to such conclusions as the subject becomes the object, the subject becomes the object and the preposition continues. The verb's shape is changing. The infinite history shifts in the shape of the participle. Then finally, the teacher told them that these changes form the rules for changing the active voice into the passive voice.

iv. Providing opportunities for students to demonstrate

When the teachers explained the topic, the students payed close attention. However, when students were asked to justify their statements, other students listened to the students speaking either out of curiosity or out of the fear of being asked to oneself. This was the opportunity provided for students to demonstrate their current level of understanding in listening skill by most of the teachers. The students were asked to justify their statements and when they were asked to do so, the students were required to speak up hence, supporting their speaking skill. This was how most of the teachers made use of this technique to provide opportunities

to demonstrate their current level of understanding in speaking school. In most cases, by asking them to read the lesson that would enable students to read with correctness, tension, intonation and pronunciation, the teachers offered opportunities for students to demonstrate their present level of comprehension of reading skills. To provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their current level of understanding in writing skill, the teachers in most of the schools made the students to write between the lines, the meaning, and the explanation to write down on the notebooks to improve their writing.

v. Representation of content in multiple ways

In most of the schools, the teachers made use of charts, flash cards, video clips, gave real life examples to substantiate their explanation.

During the observation in one of the schools the teachers made use of a picture strip story which consisted of a series of pictures that have a story sequence, that are designed to be read as a narrative in sequence. The teachers had used picture strip story as visual aids. She divided the class into different small groups and gave a strip story. A student in the group then showed the first picture of the story to the other members in the group and asked them to predict what the second picture would be like. This activity (picture strip story) was conducted to solve the problem of the task that was given to the students to solve it through pictures to make the students understand the concept in a better manner.

Elaboration

i. Asking recapitulative questions

In most of the schools, the teachers did not ask recapitulative questions. Very few teachers followed this process. Some teachers recapitulated the whole lesson in a gist and in-between they asked questions, and in some schools, the teachers directly asked the questions like why, how, justify, who, when teachers related to their topics. The teachers did not make use of audio visual aids and other teaching materials to bring novelty in their teaching approach. They simply followed the lecture method. Only in few schools, the teacher used story method, picture strip story demonstration, flashcard, video clips, and role-play, language games to provide novelty in teaching approach.

ii. Encouraging students to extend the concept and skills in new situation

Only in few schools the teachers encouraged to apply or extend the concept and skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing listening, speaking, reading and writing in new situation. They asked the students the value of being able to speak, read, write and listen and students came up with various responses. Teachers also suggested the students to read articles, novels, short stories, news papers, magazines etc.

iii. Extending and refining students understanding

Only in few cases, the teachers tried to extend and refine students understanding. They gave activities for the students where students encountered something new and the teachers helped them to reconcile it with their previous ideas and experiences and by helping the students to be the active creators of their own knowledge. The teachers recollected the understanding and opinion of the students regarding the lesson. Taking each point as given by the students view

point the teachers provided appropriate feedback to the students. The teachers also gave positive verbal reinforcement to the students.

iv. Monitoring students understanding

Listening skill- The teachers in most of the schools took into consideration the understanding about the lesson learned. Teachers concluded that the students have successfully understood the lesson which implied that the students have been listening carefully during the teaching, learning process.

Speaking skill – The teachers in most of the schools monitored students understanding in speaking skill based on the experience and understanding about the topic. They also guided them in framing proper sentences.

In one of the schools, it was observed that to monitor the students understanding in speaking skill the teacher conducted an activity in the class like picture composition. The teachers drew an incomplete picture on the chalkboard. Students were divided into different groups. Each group was given a turn to add to the incomplete picture that was drawn on the board. All the groups had taken turns. After the completion of the drawing each group were given an opportunity to tell their version of the story to the whole class.

Writing skill –Most of the teachers asked the students and guided them to write in between the lines while the teachers explained each paragraphs and stanzas of the lesson. The teachers also checked their spelling errors, grammatical errors and also their hand writing.

v. Encouraging students to develop a meaningful context

To encourage students to develop a meaningful context into which new learning can be connected, the teachers in most of the schools asked the students to read the whole story. Students read silently and got engaged on the paragraphs. While reading silently the teachers also asked them to develop a connection between what has been explained to them during the class. To cultivate higher order thinking, the teachers encouraged the students to ask questions, explore and assess what they knew. The students were urged to be actively involved in the process of learning.

Evaluation

i. Evaluating students' understanding

After the reading and explanation of the paragraphs and stanzas, the teachers made the students to read the lines with correct stress, intonation and pronunciation and after that they were made to summarize the lesson in their own words and finally lesson. This way in most of the schools, the teachers tried to evaluate students understanding of key concepts and skills.

ii. Supporting students to reflect

Listening skill- when students expressed their ideas and understanding about the lesson. The teachers added more points to their understanding by relating their understanding to real life situations. This technique was applied by the teachers in most of the schools.

Speaking skill – students were often asked to speak up their views and opinions which helped them to enhance their speaking skill. Most of the teachers followed this technique.

Reading skill – The teachers in most of the schools made the students read the paragraphs and stanzas and also made them do the extra reading to enhance their reading skill.

Writing skill- To support students to reflect on their learning processes in writing skill, the teachers in most of the schools, made them write between the lines and made them summarize the lesson in their in their own words.

iii. Providing feedback and assisting students to evaluate

It was observed that in most of the schools, the teachers asked the students to complete the exercises at the end of the chapter. After the completion of the exercises the teachers gave feedback to the students progress and achievement.

iv. Guiding students to identify future learning goals

Half of the teachers did not guide the students to identify future learning goals. But few teachers always guided the students, right from the process I (Engage) till process V (Evaluate).

It was observed that in one of the schools, the teachers defined the objectives so specifically to the students like why learning of prose, poetry, grammar lesson in English is so important. She said poetry is learnt (i) to train the emotional feelings of the students, (ii) to develop their aesthetic sense, (iii) to develop a desirable taste for reading, (iv) to help the students to read out the poem with proper stress, rhythm and intonation. She also gave the students the importance of prose lesson. She said prose lesson helps in (i) cognitive and affective domain (ii) it helps to develop four language skills, (iii) it enriches the vocabulary (iv) it develops the expression skill and for grammar she said (i) grammar lesson develops students insights into the structures of English language (ii) it helps to express their ideas logically and correctly in speech and writing. (iii) it also develops their understanding about the rules of English grammar through use and practice of its structures. This way she guided the students to identify future learning goals.

v. Tools of Evaluation

Few teachers conducted quizzes time to time to seek the students interest and to make them engaged. Students were divided into groups and the teachers asked questions to them related to the topic. Whichever, group gave the correct answer that group was declared the winner .The teachers conducted debate from time to time to enhance the listening and speaking skills of the students. It also provided room for brain storming and do the comprehensive reading. Students are given the topics and they are divided into two groups. One for the motion and other one for against the motion. All students were to participate and share their views. Through this way, they observed how students performed and involved in the group. There were few teachers who evaluated the performance of the students through role play. In a role play, the teachers gave the students the character according to the

text and asked them to act like those characters. The teachers also made an effort to include shy natured students in the role play so that they become confident. Most of the teachers in the schools conducted recitation when they taught poetry to enhance students speaking skill. Each individual had to recite each stanzas of the poem. Class tests were arranged for the students in most of the schools. It was observed that half of the teachers made use of class tests for the students as one of the tools of evaluation. Most of the teachers observed the performance of the students in the classroom and they were on their toes to observe each individual in a systematic manner. The teachers after each lesson asked the students to summarize the lesson in their own words. The teachers also gave activities like making them write letters, short stories and poems and sometimes asked them to write the script for the play. The students are also provided with different topics for essay writing. Most of the teachers asked the students to do a presentation on the basis of their understanding. Dictation was also done to check the students spellings.

Discussion

In order to know the teaching process that the teachers make use in the classroom, different parameters were prepared and were observed during class room teaching to answer the research questions. During observation, the researchers explicitly found the following:

Only in few schools the teachers made use of students previous experiences as the base for explaining new concepts by making them do certain activities to come to the topic. While observing the teachers in most of the schools, the teachers gave examples and illustrated the relevant points to be explained. They gave examples from real life situations too to link the lesson so that students get clear knowledge about the topic that was taught to them.

The students performance was assessed through observation, project work, class test, quiz, group work and debate, role play, recitation and classroom performance and participation in the classroom. Most of the teacher respondents faced problems in teaching English language; the students don't understand the structure of the English language properly. Sometimes the teachers brought a recorded material to the classroom and made them listen to it and made them complete the task related to that material but very few students completed the task. The teachers also faced problems in developing students speaking skill because students didn't have good command over English language, not fluent in English, bad pronunciation, they lost the chain of thoughts while speaking and couldn't reconnect it, they lacked words and thoughts to express it into a proper sentence and communication was less through English language. The teachers also faced problems in enhancing students reading skill because students were least interested in reading books. When teachers encouraged them by telling stories thinking that students will be motivated to read books, but they showed least interest.

When teachers asked them to read the text book aloud in the class, they did not read it properly as they had tough time to pronounce the words correctly and this is all because of lack of practice in reading. The teachers also brought good story books for the students to read, but the students just went through the book and

saw the picture inside the book and did not read the book. The teachers faced problems in developing writing skill because students had limited vocabulary, found difficult to translate ideas into English while writing.

During observation, it is felt that students have no command over English language and therefore it becomes difficult to make them understand English properly. Hence, the teachers should create an English learning environment both inside and outside the classroom. Different literary programs like extempore, essay writing, poetry writing, recitation, debate can be organized in the schools and reward should be given to the winners. This way the students will be motivated and be encouraged. Extra hour should be given in all the secondary schools of South Sikkim for developing and enhancing the habit of reading, listening, speaking and writing skills of the students. Both the school heads and the teachers should co-operate and arrange the needful for the benefits of the students. The teachers should create an ambience of constructivist classroom to develop the power of imagination and creativity among students.

The present study is delimited to the South district of Sikkim. As the district have a maximum number of schools (primary, upper primary, secondary and senior secondary), gross enrollment ratio and accessible road connectivity to the maximum schools. The schools belonging to rural and urban locations and those managed by the government of Sikkim have been surveyed and studied taking into account the objectives of the study.

The present study due to many practical reasons has some limitations and hence narrows in scope. But it opens up certain avenues for future researchers. The study made the following recommendations for future researchers who want to pursue study in the same line.

A comparative study can be undertaken to check the pedagogical processes of English language teaching in the state of Sikkim, similar studies can be undertaken for other classes and for other subjects, Further studies may be undertaken by extending the population, which may give a different result, a case study can be undertaken on the given issues in order to know the ground reality much in-depth.

Conclusion

Classroom observation is also one of the powerful methods of monitoring the success of the instructor in the classroom. Through this study, attempt has been made to see the extent as to how constructivist approach is used by the teachers in the teaching learning processes. Conversely, study has explored the teaching processes used by English teachers in the classroom towards learning English language at secondary schools in Sikkim. The sequential processes are mainly used to link up the connection between past and the present learning experience, designing activities for students engagement, assess learning outcomes, type of resource used in learning, identifying and developing concepts, reconstructing students knowledge, assessing students current level of understanding in listening, speaking, reading and writing, elaboration through recapitulative questions, development of higher order thinking, evaluation of students of key concepts and skills, identifying and motivating the students to identify future learning goals and evaluating students knowledge through quiz, debate, role play,

recitation, tests, observation and performance dialogue, essay and summary writing and projects, respectively.

Acknowledgement

The authors are grateful to the department of Education, Government of Sikkim for permitting to carry out interviews in the secondary schools of South Sikkim. The authors also thank the students, schools heads and the English language teachers for their participation in the interviews.

References

- Choudhury, K. B. (2011). Communicative Language Teaching Approach at Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh –Teachers’ Perceptions and Classroom Practice. Unpublished M.Ed dissertation, Department of English, BGC Trust University Bangladesh. Retrieved from www.languageinindia.com.
- Graddol, D. (1997). *The Future of English*. London: British Council.
- Jha, S.K. (2013). English in Eastern Ethiopia is Learnt; Not Mastered. *The Journal of English Language Teaching*, Canadian Center of Science and Education. 6 (4), 42-55.
- Mathuramani, K., and Ganesan, S. (2011). Modern Trends in English Language Teaching. *The Journal of English Language Teaching in India*, 49 (6), 39-43.
- Mishra, M.K. (2009). Strategy paper on Tribal Education in Orissa. Retrieved from slideshare.net/mahendrakmishra/strategy-paper.
- NCERT (2006). National Focus Group Report on English Teaching, New Delhi, pp.1-35. Retrieved from <https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/focus-group/english.pdf> on 20th of November, 2020.
- Rathore, B. (2013). Innovations in Teaching English. *Journal of English Language and Teaching*, 51(1), 7- 13.
- Senthilkumar, M. (2010). Problems and Perspectives in Teaching English in Mixed Ability Classrooms. Retrieved from <https://www.essays24.com/essay/Problems-And-Perspectives-In-Teaching-English-In-Mixed/55.html>.
- Venkateswaran, S. and Gayathri, S. (2012). ELT Classroom Practices-Implication for Professional Development. *ELT Weekly* 4 (34). Retrieved from <https://eltweekly.com/2012/08/vol-4-issue-34-research-article-elt-classroom-practices-implications-for-professional-development-by-gayathri-anand/>.
- Wang, F. (2010). The Necessity of Grammar Teaching. *English Language Teaching*, 3 (2), 78-81.
- Zainuddin, Roquiya and Ahmed Anjum (2008). Pedagogy in the Light of Constructivism. *Anweshika: Indian Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 5, No.1, pp. 70-77.